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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

AGDA-A (M)(17 Aug 71)FOR OT UT 71B034

31 August 1971

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report: BG Wallace K. Wittwer, CG, 18th Military Police Brigade & Provost Marshal, USARV,

Period 4 January 1970 thru 15 June 1971 (U)

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1. Reference: AR 1-26, dated 4 November 1966, subject, Senior Officer Debriefing Program. (U)

- 2. Transmitted herewith is the report of BG Wallace K. Wittwer, subject as above.
- 3. This report is provided to insure appropriate benefits are realized from the experiences of the author. The report should be reviewed in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 5, AR 1-26; however, it should not be interpreted as the official view of the Department of the Army, or of any agency of the Department of the Army.
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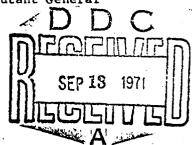
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM APO SAN FRANCISCO 96375

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9 - of 1971

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report - BG Wallace K. Wittwer

Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development Department of the Army Washington, D. C. 20310

- 1. Inclosed are three copies of the Senior Officer Debriefing Report prepared by BG Wallace K. Wittwer. The report covers the period 4 January 1970 thru 15 June 1971 during which time BG Wittwer served as Commanding General, 18th Military Police Brigade and as the Provost Marshal, United States Army Vietnam.
- 2. BG Wittwer is recommended as a guest speaker at appropriate service schools or joint colleges.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

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GEODE F. MACLAREN

CPT. INF.

Acting Asst Adjutant General

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DEBRIEFING REPORT (RCS-CSFOR-74)

Country:

Republic of Vietnam

Debriefing Report:

Brigadier General Wallace K. Wittwer

Duty Assignments:

Commanding General, 18th Military Police Brigade and Provost Marshal, United States Army Vietnam

From 4 January 1970 to 15 June 1971

Date of Report:

15 June 1971

PREFACE

This report addresses only those major substantive issues which I feel warrant further study for counterinsurgency operations with respect to Military Folice participation. I have not addressed internal problems unique to the situation as I experienced them, since these have been addressed in other reports and recommendations.

- I have divided the report into seven parts as follow:
 - I MILL TARY FOLICE FORCE STRUCTURES
 - II AIRCRAFT SUPPORT FOR MILITARY POLICE OPERATIONS
 - III CONVOY SECURITY
 - IV COMBINED FOLICE OPERATIONS
 - V DRUG SUPPRESSION
 - VI CRIME SUPPRESSION
 - VII CONFINEMENT

W. K. WITIWER

Brigadier General, USA

Commanding

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1 MILITARY ROBER FORCE STRUCTURES

- 1. My dual role as Provost Marshal and commander of USAPV military police, plus my earlier experience as a Division Provost Marshal in Vietnam, have led to several conclusions concerning military police force structure in this type environment.
- a. Divisional military police companies are not designed to support the simultaneous commitment of all three brigades, nor are they structured to man more than one base area. The First Division, for example, maintained five major base camps. Each of these required a normal complement of gate guards, on-and-off post patrols, turnkeys, prisoner of war guards, military police and Provost Marshal office operations, and CID operations. In every division, it became necessary to greatly augment the divisional company with additional manpower. Even when this manpower was provided, the units were inefficient as a result of the lack of the corresponding quantities of TOE equipment, particularly vehicles and radios. It is recommended that when a standard division is employed in the manner used in Vietnam, that additional cellular teams be authorized for the company to provide the specialized additional skills and properly equipped manpower required.
- b. Separate brigades are not now authorized accredited Criminal Investigators, nor the equipment they need to operate. Each separate brigade should have at least one accredited and three apprentice investigators assigned with the same type equipment authorized to the divisions.
- c. Support Commands should include a full staff provost marshal team, such as was authorized for the Saigon Support Command. Additionally, security guard companies should be assigned as required by the bases, depots, ports and storage areas operated. These companies should be commanded by military police officers, although the enlisted personnel need not be school trained as 95B.
- d. Sentry and patrol dog companies should be incorporated early into the build-up phase and their employment be built into the basic manning structure in order to provide both savings in manpower and greater deterrent to attack and/or pilferage. The use of the patrol dog should be expanded to permit utilization of dog security on posts not suitable for sentry dogs.
- e. Each level of headquarters, from corps up, should have an organic military police company assigned. The unit will provide for the headquarters complex security, less perimeter guard, and will have enough additional platoons or squads to permit temporary augmentation of subordinate military police units, or the launching of special missions. For example, the former IFFV Headquarters was authorized a TO&E company. The assets of the company were utilized to secure both the headquarters itself and the general officer

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billet area. The remaining squads performed normal discipline, law and order missions in the city of Nha Trang. Most importantly, they provided an organic ready reaction force in event of emergency and were so utilized during the attacks on the headquarters in TET 1968. During the early redeployment schedule, this company was reduced to one platoon and now has no capability of performing other than basic guard duty. A similar sequence took place with the former IIFFV. Conversely, neither XXIV Corps or IMAC have ever had organic military police and must be supported from assets of the 18th Military Police Brigade which were intended for other uses.

- f. As units are redeployed from Vietnam, experience has shown that their organic military police should be the last element scheduled for standdown. For example, as the brigades of a division stand-down, their platoons should remain and join the parent company. Problems of security and discipline increase rapidly in the latter stages and the concentration of military police has proven essential.
- g. The problems of discipline which have developed in Vietnam are perhaps unique. However, it is my opinion that future planning should utilize the number of military police per thousand troops which has been developed here as the minimum. Two per cent of the supported troops should be military policemen committed to regular police duties. This figure does not include overhead, confinement personnel, or dog handlers. To emphasize the inadequacies of earlier staffing, this proportion will not be reached until at least 1 January 1972 as a result of supported troop reductions and maintenance of the military police strength of the 18th Military Police Brigade.
- h. The area support concept under which the 18th Military Police Brigade was organized end has functioned since 1966 has increasingly been proven valid. As units have redeployed and many residual base camps have remained o. The tional with units having no organic military police, the brigade has been able to adjust to provide minimum essential coverage. Support of both the Cambadian and Laotian incursions was accomplished without disruption of arganic military police structures. The development of the drug problem, ractal problems, tensions between US and Vietnamese personnel, crime suppression, logistical security, and convoy operations as described elsewhere have required uniformity of response and controls. The central direction through the military police brigade structure has been rapid and permitted responsiveness to the varying needs of the commanders. For example, commanders having specific local problems but with inadequate military police support have been able to call for saturation support by elements of the brigade located elsewhere. Combined teams of US and ARVN military police and National Police have been flown in for concentrated campaigns and then relocated to other trouble spots. At the same time, I visualize that as redeployment nears the final stages and vast areas are void of US forces, the area concept should be modified and military police forces assigned directly to the senior commanders of the remaining troop concentrations, such as Saigon, Da Nang and Cam Ranh Bay, with central technical direction remaining with the senior Army headquarters Provost Marshal.

II AIRCRAFT SUPPORT FOR MILITARY POLICE OPERATIONS

- 1. Effective military police operations in Vietnam are heavily dependent on availability of aircraft. During combat operations, effective convoy control is impossible without helicopter-borne command elements. During discipline, law, and order operations the use of aircraft for control of traffic has been the largest single deterrent to speeders. The location and identification of diverted trucks, ships, or supplies has been most effectively accomplished by aerial search. Recovery and security of disabled vehicles and other emergency rescue missions depend upon the speed of aircraft.
- 2. Military police units during the redeployment phases are increasingly fragmented and scattered. Command and control of these isolated elements is inadequate without air conveyance. Similarly, timely CID coverage of command interest investigations, such as attempted murders by fragmentation grenades, is impossible in isolated areas unless aircraft are immediately available.
- 3. In Military Regions Three and Four, two dedicated OH58A helicopters have been fully utilized. Additionally, response to special requests has been good. In Military Regions One and Two, only in the past few months has aircraft support been available on a scheduled basis, but this has been restricted to traffic safety regulation. Other uses of aircraft have been dependent upon the degree of informal cooperation between the local provost marshals and aircraft commanders. It is strongly recommended that planning for counterinsurgency operations include either organic or dedicated aircraft, suitable to the area, for each military police battalion or higher unit.

III CONVOY SECURITY

- 1. During stability operations the use of routes of ground communication is essential to friendly forces. The degree of security on MSRs is dependent upon the overall security of the area through which they pass and/or the amount of combat strength which is dedicated to securing them. During the period of my earlier tour, June 1967 to July 1968, only a few routes were coded GREEN. Convoy or single vehicle use of other routes required tactical operations for security. During the report period, many routes became GREEN during daylight. During the latter months, GREEN routes were no longer defended by tactical forces, but by RF/FF in many instances. Interdiction of convoys and single vehicles continue to occur intermittently in widely scattered locations. Military police roles in convoy security have been changed to respond to the challenges.
- 2. When route security is provided external to the convoy, little internal security is required. When route security is not provided externally, but available on call in terms of gunships, TACAIR or artillery, some form of internal protection is mandatory. CL 19 from Qhi Nhon to Pleiku is an example. Military Police Armored eres, XM706, commonly called V100s, were placed with each convoy on the route. However, the numbers of such cars available were insufficient to cover all convoys. Accordingly, the transportation units placed armor on 2½ or 5 ton trucks, equipped them with crews and automatic weapons as substitutes or supplements to the armored cars. They work reasonably well, but the drain of equipment and manpower from the transportation unit is unacceptable. There are also problems of mancuver off-road, of inability to mass vahicles to reach the kill zone of the attack, and inadequacies of the home-made armor.
- Military police no longer place their armored cars in the convoy on this route, but have divided the route into sectors, each patrolled by armored cars who can rescond to any request for assistance, act as scouts and observers, and provide security for downed or disabled vehicles. Their mobility, fire-power, and communications permit complete coverage of the route. Experience has shown this to be a superior means of providing assistance and a greater degree of security. Convoys, however, continue to utilize the make-shift gun trucks to provide immediate response in event of attack. In other areas, such as in southern Military Region Two, the routes are traversed so infrequently that best protection continues to be provided by the combined use of gun trucks and armored cars within the convoy.
- 4. Several ORLL and other studies have addressed this problem. My purpose is to emphasize the necessity for detailed study in the changing circumstances which occur during the phases of a counterinsurgency operation. In my opinion, the provision of armored car companies to the military police structure in sufficient quantities to provide assured teams with every convoy on interdicted routes is the most efficient use of resources and the most flexible solution to the problem.

5. A related, but significant part of convoy security is convoy safety from the standpoint of accident prevention. The single greatest irritant to the Vietnamese people is the traffic accident caused by careless US drivers and undisciplined convoys. Force structures must include sufficient personnel to maintain complete highway regulation and control of all convoy movements, particularly as the indigenous forces build up to running their convoys on the same routes. Sufficient military police must be provided to ensure that no convoy moves without military police escort to maintain contact with the highway controllers, to control speed of the convoys, and to coordinate with National Police and ARVNAF military police, as well as to conduct immediate investigations of accidents and procure rapid medical and legal assistance to the injured.

IV COMBINED POLICE OFERATIONS

- 1. The system of combined police operations developed in Vietnam has been, and will continue to be, one of the most essential elements of achieving stability.
- 2. Previous commanders have discussed the formation and growth of combined police operations, which need not be repeated here. During the report period, the number of combined police stations, checkpoints, and patrols were greatly expanded. Reports, procedures, and techniques were greatly improved. The limiting factors on further expansion and improvement continued to be the inadequacy in both numbers and quality of the National Police (NP) and the RVNAF Military Police (QC).
- Two mistakes were made in the original structuring of the QC. No QC were provided in the organization of ARVN divisions or separate brigades. continues to result in undiscipline among the divisional troops, particularly in convoy operations. It also drains OC strength from the established QC battalions. Of equal importance is the misuse of QC battalions as Prisoner of War Camp guards. Eleven QC battalions were authorized; two to support each Military Region, one for Saiger and two in reserve. As the PW Camp structure grew. PW Guard Companies were not formed. Instead, companies of regular tactical QC battalions were drained off for the five mainland camps. As the Central PW Camp on Phu Quoc Island grew, eventually five of the original eleven battalions were committed to static prisoner guard duties. The net effort has been to reduce the QC strength per Military Region from two to one, each further reduced by a company for regional PW Camps. As a result of this sttrictor, the 43 commander can seldom provide manpower and equipment to mount combined patrols or stations. During both the Cambodian and Laotian incursions, QC strength was inadequate to control ARVN personnel and convoys, even though many of those performing combined duties were relocated to support these oper-Autons.
- It is recognized that USARV has no responsibility for the organization and training or employment of the QC structure. At the same time, USARV is charged with the development and refinement of combined police operations. Only through close informal coordination and cooperation between USARV Provost Marshals and military police with the MACV advisory officers has the system been made to work as well as it has. The MACV advisory teams have performed in an outstanding fashion. However, because of the intimate relationship between the US and ARVN military police functions it is recommended that future planning place the advisory responsibility on the Army Provost Marshal and that he be staffed to discharge this responsibility. It is further recommended that QC be authorized for ARVN Divisions, separate brigades, and Corps and that separate PW guard companies be authorized and established.

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- 5. With respect to the National Police, there are a wide variety of problems. The establishment of roles and missions of the regular police, the special police, and the Field Force police is beyond the scope of my expertise. Similarly, the total authorized strength of the police structure as a portion of the national manpower assets is beyond my ken. On a daily operating basis of forming and maintaining combined police operations, the effects of these decisions as wall as the advisory structure are of concern. The national policeman receives good basic recruit training. He receives nothing further. although plans have been made for advanced training at some future time. The advisory structure goes only to the Province or District level and is keyed toward advising the NF Chief at these levels. There is no advisory capability for further training or detailed supervision of the national policemen themselves. Again, by default, this task has fallen to the PM USARV through the operation of combined police systems. When there are sufficient National Police assigned to combined duties, when these men are provided with the equipment authorized to them, and when they are permitted to remain in such duties for a reasonable period of time, they learn quickly and willingly from both the US and RVNAF military police. In practice they are seldom furnished, in sufficient quantity, properly equipped, or with enough consistericy to achieve the level of upgrading necessary. It is recommended that the advisory role of the Public Safety Division of USAID be re-examined with the view toward transfer to the Army or of expanding its capabilities to continue training and development assistance beyond the recruit school, the officer academy, and the police chief level.
- 6. Despite the problems still existing, the combined police system is working with remarkable effectiveness. It is absolutely essential to the maintenance of discipline, law, and order among US troops, and as the greatest single deterrent to conflict between US personnel and the Vietnamese population. Training in the techniques of combined operations should be included in both enlisted and officer Military Police courses. Specific TO&E cells should be developed for augmentation of standard MP companies which would facilitate combined operations without detracting from normal unilateral military police operations. Finally, the Military Police portion of the total strength in any insurgency operation should provide adequate forces to establish and maintain combined operations throughout the campaign.

V DRUG SUPPRESSION

- 1. While the problem of widespread drug use among US forces is not a predictable factor in counterinsurgencies, it has been in Vietnam a most disastrous one.
- 2. In the late months of 1967 the use of marijuana began to spread rapidly, but there was little real command interest. In general, the problem was treated as belonging to the enforcement agencies, not the command as a whole. During the late months of 1970 the heroin problem took on similar proportions, but with far greater import. Within USANY, it was rapidly recognized that the problem was a total one for the command, with every commander and staff section directly involved. Had this approach been adopted early, I am convinced that the growth of heroin usage would have developed more slowly. I do not think it could have been avoided.
- 3. Although there has been no evidence to prove, or disprove, that the flow of drugs into Vietnam is NV1 or VC controlled, the possibility exists and the probability is high. Even if introduction of the drugs to debilitate the Allied forces were not undertaken, the indirect benefit through the operation of a highly lucrative business to finance the Communist war effort is real and likely.
- 4. The recent belated actions being urged by the central government of RVN will, in my opinion, give a good indicator of the strength and weaknesses of that government and a test of its ability to make itself felt on other critical issues.
- 5. For the reasons cited, future counterinsurgency planning should take into control the possibility that drugs, alcohol, or other morale destroying goods or services will be used either directly or indirectly by the enemy. Force perusture planning should include at the outset sufficient trained investigative, amount from the military services and the US Bureaus of Narcotics and Customs, to parmit early detection and elimination of illicit traffickers. Adequate chemical laboratory personnel and equipment should be either brought into country or be available within a reasonable time-distance.

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VI CRINE MERMESSION

- 1. It is axiomatic that any group of individuals will include those whose moral standards and ambitions will load them into crime. The US Army is no exception, to include the civilian employees accompanying the forces into a counterinsurgency operation. In this portion of my report, I am not discussing the normal crimes of murder, raje, assault, etc., but the type of crime involving first money manipulation, property diversions, contract frauds, and other misuses of funds and property, and secondly war crimes.
- 2. Experience in each war have shown that the crush of urgency in a buildup phase leads to taking accounting shortcuts. For example, vehicles which were imported into country were not followed with an audit trail. Much valuable equipment was not accountable until late in the effort. Contracts were written by honest man trying to get the job done as quickly as possible. Honest men can be subverted by crooks to countless manners. The development of clubs and messes is a necessity. Experience has shown their vulnerability to manipulators of all types. More recently the attempts to illegally export non-ferrous metals have grown. Diversions of all types of fuels have plagued the command for years. In early 1970, special teams of the CID were established to work with the logistics system managers and the Vietnam Open Mess Agency to minimize losses of these types. These teams were formed too late and with too few people of the right capabilities. Future planning should provide for such teams with the initial increments. The teams should include men trained as investigators who are experts in logistics, in business management, in accounting, and with some legal training. If every action involving funds and property is reviewed by an investigator who is trained to study the proposed action from the view of the crook, the honest efforts of the regular action and staff officers will be protected.
- 3. In the field of war crimes, the Provost Marshal becomes involved in two ways. During a combat phase he is responsible for the safe and humane treatment of those detainees who are determined to be prisoners of war. He retains this responsibility as long as the prisoner remains in custody. He is not responsible at point of capture nor during pre-custody interrogations. There are no cases known to me that have been labeled war crimes during periods of PM custody. In my opinion this is the direct result of the intensive training given to all Military Policemen. It would appear that similar intensive training needs to be given to all soldiers, regardless of branch or expected duty position.
- 4. The Provost Marshal also becomes involved in war crimes during the investigative phase. At Department of Army, the Provost Marshal General has been charged with these investigations. More recently it has become the responsibility of the CID Agency (soon to become a command). The point is that Department of Army has placed the responsibility on an agency considered to have the expertise necessary to conduct investigations leading to acceptable evidence for legal proceedings, should it appear warranted. Within MACV and

Usually this responsibility has been given to the Inspector General, with the magnestion that CID investigators be called upon to assist. My experience has been that there is a great deal of duplication of investigative effort since the initial command investigation usually leads to an IG investigation, which when known to Department of Army, results in a CID investigation. All of these investigations require a degree of effort disproportionate to the results usually obtained. To have duplicate investigations is wasteful of limited investigative capability. Further, when the initial interviews are not properly conducted in terms of legal warnings and controls, much usable evidence is lost when legal proceedings are taken. I recommend that all war crimes investigations be conducted by the CID with such other special expertise assistance as may be required.

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VII CONFINEMENT

- 1. Confinement of US military personnel contributes nothing directly to stability operations. On the other hand, as long as there are troops there will be some who must be removed from their units. In stability operations, troop conduct and attitude are essential ingredients of the whole effort, and for this reason it is particularly important that adequate confinement facilities be available and that they be operated in such a manner as to not detract from the primary missions of commanders.
- 2. Under the constraints of manpower ceilings, every soldier in Vietnam should be contributing directly to the war/peace effort. In the two stockades, we have a normal population of nearly 600 prisoners, with a requirement for approximately 300 custodial personnel. This is nearly 1000 soldiers who must be included in strength totals, and whose support requires even more troops.
- 3. Planning for future stability operations should provide for confinement outside the theater or area of operations and the establishment of a small transient detention facility where soldiers to be placed in pre-trial or post trial confinement can be quickly processed for shipment out of country.

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